

Central American Federation

PEACE, AMITY, COMMERCE, AND NAVIGATION

Treaty signed at Washington December 5, 1825

Senate advice and consent to ratification December 29, 1825

Ratified by the President of the United States January 16, 1826

Ratified by the Central American Federation July 29, 1826

Ratifications exchanged at Guatemala August 2, 1826

Entered into force August 2, 1826

Proclaimed by the President of the United States October 28, 1826

Articles relating to commerce and navigation expired August 2, 1838

*Federation terminated 1847*¹

8 Stat. 322; Treaty Series 39²

GENERAL CONVENTION OF PEACE, AMITY, COMMERCE AND NAVIGATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE FEDERATION OF THE CENTRE OF AMERICA

The United States of America, and the Federation of the Centre of America desiring to make firm and permanent the peace and friendship which happily prevails between both nations, have resolved to fix, in a manner clear, distinct, and positive, the rules which shall in future be religiously observed between the one and the other, by means of a Treaty or general Convention of Peace, Friendship, Commerce and Navigation.

For this most desirable object, the President of the United States of America has conferred full powers on Henry Clay, their Secretary of State, and the Executive Power of the Federation of the Centre of America on Antonio Jose Cañas, a Deputy of the constituent National Assembly for the Province of San Salvador, and Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Pleni-

¹ A congressional decree of May 30, 1838, granting the constituent states (now the Republics of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) freedom of action in most important matters, led to practical dissolution of the Federation in 1839 and to complete termination by 1847 (3 Miller 234).

² For a detailed study of this treaty, see 3 Miller 209.

potentiary of that Republic near the United States, who after having exchanged their said full powers in due and proper form, have agreed to the following Articles:

ARTICLE 1st

There shall be a perfect, firm, and inviolable peace and sincere friendship between the United States of America and the Federation of the Centre of America, in all the extent of their possessions and territories, and between their people and Citizens respectively, without distinction of persons or places.

ARTICLE 2^d

The United States of America and the Federation of the Centre of America desiring to live in peace and harmony with all the other nations of the earth, by means of a policy frank and equally friendly with all, engage mutually not to grant any particular favour to other nations in respect of commerce and navigation, which shall not immediately become common to the other party, who shall enjoy the same freely, if the concession was freely made, or on allowing the same compensation, if the concession was conditional.

ARTICLE 3^d

The two high contracting parties, being likewise desirous of placing the Commerce and Navigation of their respective Countries on the liberal basis of perfect equality and reciprocity, mutually agree that the Citizens of each may frequent all the coasts and countries of the other, and reside and trade there, in all kind of produce, manufactures and merchandize, and they shall enjoy all the rights, privileges and exemptions in navigation and commerce, which native Citizens do or shall enjoy, submitting themselves to the laws, decrees and usages there established, to which native Citizens are subjected. But it is understood that this article does not include the coasting trade of either Country, the regulation of which is reserved by the parties respectively, according to their own separate laws.

ARTICLE 4th

They likewise agree, that whatever kind of produce, manufacture or merchandize of any foreign country can be, from time to time, lawfully imported into the United States, in their own vessels, may be also imported in vessels of the Federation of the Centre of America; and that no higher or other duties, upon the tonnage of the vessel, or her cargo, shall be levied and collected, whether the importation be made in vessels of the one country or of the other. And in like manner that whatever kind of produce, manufactures or merchandize of any foreign country can be, from time to time, lawfully imported into the Central Republic, in its own vessels, may be also imported

in vessels of the United States; and that no higher or other duties, upon the tonnage of the vessel, or her cargo, shall be levied and collected, whether the importation be made in vessels of the one country or of the other. And they further agree that whatever may be lawfully exported or re-exported from the one country, in its own vessels, to any foreign country, may, in like manner, be exported or re-exported in the vessels of the other country. And the same bounties, duties and drawbacks shall be allowed and collected, whether such exportation or re-exportation be made in vessels of the United States or of the Central Republic.

ARTICLE 5th

No higher or other duties shall be imposed on the importation into the United States of any articles, the produce or manufactures of the Federation of the Centre of America, and no higher or other duties shall be imposed on the importation into the Federation of the Centre of America of any articles, the produce or manufactures of the United States, than are or shall be payable on the like articles being the produce or manufactures of any other foreign country; nor shall any higher or other duties or charges be imposed in either of the two countries, on the exportation of any articles to the United States or to the Federation of the Centre of America, respectively, than such as are payable on the exportation of the like articles to any other foreign country; nor shall any prohibition be imposed on the exportation or importation of any articles, the produce or manufactures of the United States or of the Federation of the Centre of America, to or from the territories of the United States, or to or from the territories of the Federation of the Centre of America, which shall not equally extend to all other nations.

ARTICLE 6th

It is likewise agreed that it shall be wholly free for all merchants, commanders of ships, and other Citizens of both countries, to manage, themselves, their own business in all the ports and places subject to the jurisdiction of each other, as well with respect to the consignment and sale of their goods and merchandize by wholesale or retail, as with respect to the loading, unloading, and sending off their ships, they being in all these cases to be treated as Citizens of the country in which they reside, or at least to be placed on a footing with the subjects or Citizens of the most favoured nation.

ARTICLE 7th

The Citizens of neither of the contracting parties shall be liable to any embargo, nor be detained with their vessels, cargoes, merchandize or effects, for any military expedition, nor for any public or private purpose whatever, without allowing to those interested a sufficient indemnification.

ARTICLE 8th

Whenever the Citizens of either of the contracting parties shall be forced to seek refuge or asylum in the rivers, bays, ports or dominions, of the other, with their vessels, whether merchant or of war, public or private, through stress of weather, pursuit of pirates, or enemies, they shall be received and treated with humanity, giving to them all favour and protection for repairing their ships, procuring provisions, and placing themselves in a situation to continue their voyage without obstacle or hindrance of any kind.

ARTICLE 9th

All the ships merchandize, and effects belonging to the Citizens of one of the contracting parties, which may be captured by pirates, whether within the limits of its jurisdiction or on the high seas, and may be carried or found in the rivers, roads, bays, ports, or dominions, of the other, shall be delivered up to the owners, they proving in due and proper form their rights before the competent tribunals; it being well understood that the claims should be made within the term of one year by the parties themselves, their attorneys, or agents of the respective Governments.

ARTICLE 10th

When any vessel belonging to the Citizens of either of the contracting parties shall be wrecked, foundered, or shall suffer any damage on the coasts, or within the dominions of the other, there shall be given to them all assistance and protection in the same manner which is usual and customary with the vessels of the nation where the damage happens, permitting them to unload the said vessel, if necessary, of its merchandize and effects, without exacting for it any duty, impost, or contribution whatever, until they may be exported.

ARTICLE 11th

The Citizens of each of the contracting parties shall have power to dispose of their personal goods within the jurisdiction of the other, by sale, donation, testament, or otherwise, and their representatives, being Citizens of the other party, shall succeed to their said personal goods, whether by testament or *ab intestato*, and they may take possession thereof, either by themselves or others acting for them, and dispose of the same at their will, paying such dues only as the inhabitants of the country, wherein the said goods are, shall be subject to pay in like cases: and if, in the case of real estate, the said heirs would be prevented from entering into the possession of the inheritance, on account of their character of aliens, there shall be granted to them the term of three years to dispose of the same, as they may think proper, and to withdraw the proceeds without molestation, and exempt from all duties of detraction, on the part of the Government of the respective States.

ARTICLE 12th

Both the contracting parties promise and engage, formally to give their special protection to the persons and property of the Citizens of each other, of all occupations, who may be in the territories subject to the jurisdiction of the one or the other, transient or dwelling therein, leaving open and free to them the tribunals of justice for their judicial recourse, on the same terms which are usual and customary with the natives or Citizens of the Country in which they may be; for which they may employ in defence of their rights such advocates, solicitors, notaries, agents, and factors, as they may judge proper, in all their trials at law; and such Citizens or agents shall have free opportunity to be present at the decisions and sentences of the tribunals in all cases which may concern them, and likewise at the taking of all examinations and evidence which may be exhibited in the said trials.

ARTICLE 13th

It is likewise agreed that the most perfect and entire security of conscience shall be enjoyed by the Citizens of both the contracting parties in the countries subject to the jurisdiction of the one and the other, without their being liable to be disturbed or molested on account of their religious belief, so long as they respect the laws and established usages of the country. Moreover, the bodies of the Citizens of one of the contracting parties, who may die in the territories of the other, shall be buried in the usual burying grounds, or in other decent and suitable places, and shall be protected from violation or disturbance.

ARTICLE 14th

It shall be lawful for the Citizens of the United States of America and of the Federation of the Centre of America to sail with their ships, with all manner of liberty and security, no distinction being made, who are the proprietors of the merchandize laden thereon, from any port to the places of those who now are or hereafter shall be at enmity with either of the contracting parties. It shall likewise be lawful for the Citizens aforesaid to sail with the ships and merchandize beforementioned, and to trade with the same liberty and security from the places, ports, and havens, of those who are enemies of both or either party, without any opposition or disturbance whatsoever, not only directly from the places of the enemy, beforementioned, to neutral places, but also from one place belonging to an enemy to another place belonging to an enemy, whether they be under the jurisdiction of one power or under several. And it is hereby stipulated, that free ships shall also give freedom to goods, and that every thing shall be deemed to be free and exempt, which shall be found on board the ships belonging to the Citizens of either of the contracting parties, although the whole lading, or any part thereof, should appertain to the enemies of either, contraband goods being always excepted. It is also agreed, in like manner, that the same liberty be extended to persons who are

on board a free ship, with this effect, that although they be enemies to both or either party, they are not to be taken out of that free ship, unless they are officers or soldiers, and in the actual service of the enemy: Provided, however, and it is hereby agreed, that the stipulations in this article contained, declaring that the flag shall cover the property, shall be understood as applying to those powers only who recognize this principle; but if either of the two contracting parties shall be at war with a third, and the other neutral, the flag of the neutral shall cover the property of enemies whose Governments acknowledge this principle, and not of others.

ARTICLE 15th

It is likewise agreed, that in the case where the neutral flag of one of the contracting parties shall protect the property of the enemies of the other, by virtue of the above stipulation, it shall always be understood that the neutral property found on board such enemy's vessels shall be held and considered as enemy's property, and as such shall be liable to detention and confiscation, except such property as was put on board such vessel before the declaration of war, or even afterwards, if it were done without the knowledge of it; but the contracting parties agree, that two months having elapsed after the declaration, their citizens shall not plead ignorance thereof. On the contrary, if the flag of the neutral does not protect the enemy's property, in that case the goods and merchandize of the neutral, embarked in such enemy's ships, shall be free.

ARTICLE 16th

This liberty of navigation and commerce shall extend to all kinds of merchandize, excepting those only which are distinguished by the name of contraband, and under this name of contraband, or prohibited goods shall be comprehended:

1st Cannons, mortars, howitzers, swivels, blunderbusses, muskets, fuzes, rifles, carbines, pistols, pikes, swords, sabres, lances, spears, halberds and grenades, bombs, powder, matches, balls, and all other things belonging to the use of these arms;

2^{ly} Bucklers, helmets, breastplates, coats of mail, infantry belts, and clothes made up in the form and for a military use;

3^{ly} Cavalry belts, and horses with their furniture;

4^{ly} And generally all kinds of arms and instruments of iron, steel, brass, and copper, or of any other materials manufactured, prepared, and formed, expressly to make war by sea or land.

ARTICLE 17th

All other merchandize and things not comprehended in the articles of contraband explicitly enumerated and classified as above, shall be held and

considered as free, and subjects of free and lawful commerce, so that they may be carried and transported in the freest manner by both the contracting parties, even to places belonging to an enemy, excepting only those places which are at that time besieged or blockaded; and to avoid all doubt in this particular, it is declared that those places only are besieged or blockaded which are actually attacked by a belligerent force capable of preventing the entry of the neutral.

ARTICLE 18th

The articles of contraband, before enumerated and classified, which may be found in a vessel bound for an enemy's port, shall be subject to detention and confiscation, leaving free the rest of the cargo and the ship, that the owners may dispose of them as they see proper. No vessel of either of the two nations shall be detained on the high seas on account of having on board articles of contraband, whenever the master, captain or supercargo of said vessel, will deliver up the articles of contraband to the captor, unless the quantity of such articles be so great and of so large a bulk, that they cannot be received on board the capturing ship without great inconvenience; but in this and in all other cases of just detention, the vessel detained shall be sent to the nearest convenient and safe port, for trial and judgment, according to law.

ARTICLE 19th

And whereas it frequently happens that vessels sail for a port or place belonging to an enemy, without knowing that the same is besieged, blockaded, or invested, it is agreed, that every vessel so circumstanced may be turned away from such port or place, but shall not be detained, nor shall any part of her cargo, if not contraband, be confiscated, unless, after warning of such blockade or investment from the commanding officer of the blockading forces, she shall again attempt to enter; but she shall be permitted to go to any other port or place she shall think proper. Nor shall any vessel of either, that may have entered into such port before the same was actually besieged, blockaded, or invested, by the other, be restrained from quitting such place with her cargo, nor if found therein after the reduction and surrender, shall such vessel or her cargo be liable to confiscation, but they shall be restored to the owners thereof.

ARTICLE 20th

In order to prevent all kind of disorder in the visiting and examination of the ships and cargoes of both the contracting parties on the high seas, they have agreed mutually, that whenever a vessel of war, public or private, shall meet with a neutral of the other contracting party, the first shall remain out of cannon shot, and may send its boat with two or three men only in order to execute the said examination of the papers concerning the ownership and cargo of the vessel, without causing the least extortion, violence or ill treat-

ment, for which the commanders of the said armed ships shall be responsible with their persons and property; for which purpose the commanders of said private armed vessels shall, before receiving their Commissions, give sufficient security to answer for all the damages they may commit. And it is expressly agreed, that the neutral party shall in no case be required to go on board the examining vessel, for the purpose of exhibiting her papers, or for any other purpose whatever.

ARTICLE 21st

To avoid all kind of vexation and abuse in the examination of the papers relating to the ownership of the vessels belonging to the Citizens of the two contracting parties, they have agreed, and do agree, that in case one of them should be engaged in war, the ships and vessels belonging to the Citizens of the other must be furnished with sea-letters or passports, expressing the name, property, and bulk of the ship, as also the name and place of habitation of the master or commander of said vessel, in order that it may thereby appear, that the ship really and truly belongs to the Citizens of one of the parties; they have likewise agreed that such ships being laden, besides the said sea-letters or passports, shall also be provided with certificates containing the several particulars of the cargo, and the place whence the ship sailed, so that it may be known whether any forbidden or contraband goods be on board the same; which certificates shall be made out by the officers of the place whence the ship sailed, in the accustomed form; without which requisites, said vessel may be detained to be adjudged by the competent tribunal, and may be declared legal prize, unless the said defect shall be satisfied or supplied by testimony entirely equivalent.

ARTICLE 22^d

It is further agreed, that the stipulations above expressed relative to the visiting and examination of vessels, shall apply only to those which sail without convoy; and when said vessels shall be under convoy, the verbal declaration of the commander of the convoy, on his word of honour, that the vessels under his protection belong to the nation whose flag he carries—and when they are bound to an enemy's port, that they have no contraband goods on board, shall be sufficient.

ARTICLE 23^d

It is further agreed that in all cases the established courts for prize causes, in the country to which the prizes may be conducted, shall alone take cognizance of them. And whenever such tribunal of either party shall pronounce judgment against any vessel or goods, or property claimed by the Citizens of the other party, the sentence or decree shall mention the reasons or motives on which the same shall have been founded, and an authenticated copy of the sentence or decree, and of all the proceedings in the case, shall, if demanded,

be delivered to the commander or agent of said vessel, without any delay, he paying the legal fees for the same.

ARTICLE 24th

Whenever one of the contracting parties shall be engaged in war with another State, no Citizen of the other contracting party shall accept a Commission, or letter of marque, for the purpose of assisting or co-operating hostilely, with the said enemy, against the said party so at war, under the pain of being treated as a pirate.

ARTICLE 25th

If, by any fatality which cannot be expected, and which God forbid, the two contracting parties should be engaged in a war with each other, they have agreed, and do agree, now for then, that there shall be allowed the term of six months to the merchants residing on the coasts and in the ports of each other; and the term of one year to those who dwell in the interior, to arrange their business and transport their effects wherever they please, giving to them the safe conduct necessary for it, which may serve as a sufficient protection until they arrive at the designated port. The Citizens of all other occupations who may be established in the territories or dominions of the United States and of the Federation of the Centre of America, shall be respected and maintained in the full enjoyment of their personal liberty and property, unless their particular conduct shall cause them to forfeit this protection, which in consideration of humanity the contracting parties engage to give them.

ARTICLE 26th

Neither the debts due from individuals of the one nation to the individuals of the other, nor shares, nor moneys, which they may have in public funds, nor in public or private banks, shall ever, in any event of war, or of national difference, be sequestered or confiscated.

ARTICLE 27th

Both the contracting parties being desirous of avoiding all inequality in relation to their public communications and official intercourse, have agreed, and do agree, to grant to the Envoys, Ministers, and other public Agents, the same favours, immunities, and exemptions, which those of the most favoured nation do or shall enjoy; it being understood that whatever favours, immunities, or privileges, the United States of America or the Federation of the Centre of America may find it proper to give to the Ministers and public Agents of any other power, shall by the same act be extended to those of each of the contracting parties.

ARTICLE 28th

To make more effectual the protection which the United States and the Federation of the Centre of America shall afford in future to the navigation and commerce of the Citizens of each other, they agree to receive and admit Consuls and Vice-Consuls in all the ports open to foreign commerce, who shall enjoy in them all the rights, prerogatives, and immunities, of the Consuls and Vice-Consuls of the most favoured nation; each contracting party, however, remaining at liberty to except those ports and places in which the admission and residence of such Consuls may not seem convenient.

ARTICLE 29th

In order that the Consuls and Vice-Consuls of the two contracting parties may enjoy the rights, prerogatives and immunities, which belong to them, by their public character, they shall, before entering on the exercise of their functions, exhibit their commission or patent, in due form, to the Government to which they are accredited; and having obtained their *Exequatur*, they shall be held and considered as such, by all the authorities, magistrates, and inhabitants, in the Consular district in which they reside.

ARTICLE 30th

It is likewise agreed, that the Consuls, their secretaries, officers, and persons attached to the service of Consuls, they not being Citizens of the country in which the Consul resides, shall be exempt from all public service, and also from all kind of taxes, imposts and contributions, except those which they shall be obliged to pay on account of commerce, or their property, to which the Citizens and inhabitants, native and foreign, of the country in which they reside are subject, being in every thing besides subject to the laws of the respective States. The archives and papers of the Consulates shall be respected inviolably, and under no pretext whatever shall any magistrate seize, or in any way interfere with them.

ARTICLE 31st

The said Consuls shall have power to require the assistance of the authorities of the country for the arrest, detention, and custody of deserters from the public and private vessels of their country, and for that purpose they shall address themselves to the courts, judges, and officers competent, and shall demand the said deserters in writing, proving by an exhibition of the registers of the vessel or ship's roll, or other public documents, that those men were part of the said crews; and on this demand, so proved, (saving, however, where the contrary is proved,) the delivery shall not be refused. Such deserters, when arrested, shall be put at the disposal of the said Consuls, and may be put in the public prisons at the request and expense of those who reclaim them, to be sent to the ships to which they belonged, or to others of

the same nation. But if they be not sent back within two months, to be counted from the day of their arrest, they shall be set at liberty, and shall be no more arrested for the same cause.

ARTICLE 32^d

For the purpose of more effectually protecting their commerce and navigation, the two contracting parties do hereby agree, as soon hereafter as circumstances will permit them, to form a Consular Convention, which shall declare specially the powers and immunities of the Consuls and Vice Consuls of the respective parties.

ARTICLE 33^d

The United States of America and the Federation of the Centre of America, desiring to make as durable as circumstances will permit, the relations which are to be established between the two parties by virtue of this Treaty or General Convention of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation, have declared solemnly, and do agree to the following points:

1st The present Treaty shall remain in full force and virtue for the term of twelve years, to be counted from the day of the exchange of the ratifications, in all the parts relating to commerce and navigation; and in all those parts which relate to peace and friendship, it shall be permanently and perpetually binding on both powers.

2nd If any one or more of the Citizens of either party shall infringe any of the articles of this Treaty, such Citizen shall be held personally responsible for the same, and the harmony and good correspondence between the two Nations shall not be interrupted thereby; each party engaging in no way to protect the offender, or sanction such violation.

3rd If, (which, indeed, cannot be expected,) unfortunately, any of the articles contained in the present Treaty shall be violated or infringed in any other way whatever, it is expressly stipulated, that neither of the contracting parties will order or authorize any acts of reprisal, nor declare war against the other, on complaints of injuries or damages, until the said party considering itself offended, shall first have presented to the other a statement of such injuries or damages, verified by competent proof, and demanded justice and satisfaction, and the same shall have been either refused or unreasonably delayed.

4th Nothing in this Treaty contained shall, however, be construed, or operate contrary to former and existing public Treaties with other Sovereigns or States.

The present Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation, shall be approved and ratified by the President of the United States of America, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate thereof, and by the Government of the Federation of the Centre of America, and the ratifications shall

be exchanged in the City of Guatemala within eight months from the date of the signature hereof, or sooner if possible.

In faith whereof, We, the Plenipotentiaries of the United States of America and of the Federation of the Centre of America, have signed and sealed these presents.

Done in the City of Washington, on the fifth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty five, in the fiftieth year of the Independence of the United States of America, and the fifth of that of the Federation of the Centre of America, in Duplicate.

H. CLAY	[SEAL]
ANTONIO JOSE CAÑAS	[SEAL]